

# Cohasset Mariner

The Mariner [and supplements] is a paid circulation newspaper published every Thursday at 541 Plain St., Marshfield, Mass. 02050 for and about the residents of Cohasset. Telephone 383-6321 or 837-3500. Mailing address: Box 71, Cohasset, Mass. 02025. Branch office at 22 Elm St., Cohasset, Mass. 02025. Application to mail at second class rates pending at Marshfield, Mass. 02050.

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As The Mariner goes to press Tuesday night, all news and advertising copy must be received by Monday at 5 p.m. Classified advertising must be received by Monday at noon. Readers are invited to submit personal items, accounts of social functions, meetings, weddings and engagements. Photographs (black and white glossy) are also welcome.

Subscription rates: in-town \$8 for one year and \$14 for two years; out-of-town \$10 for one year and \$7 for nine months.

## Editorial

### School Costs

School administrators and educators in general should take another look — a closer look — at the relationship between class size and scholastic achievement. One basic question should be addressed:

What students benefit the most from smaller classes? Certainly ALL students do not.

Several months ago the Educational Research Service of Arlington, Va., made a survey based on extensive research. This report did not get the attention it deserved.

The report clearly showed that teachers and administrators are often on the wrong wave length when they reach conclusions about class size.

The ERS survey suggests that primary grades benefit most from small classes in the teaching of reading and mathematics. The report further suggests that within the middle range [25 to 39 pupils], class size seems to have little effect on learning above the primary grades. The survey concluded that a variety of factors, apart from mere class size, determine the benefits of lowering class size.

These factors include not only the grade level of students, but also their abilities. For example, pupils with inferior abilities benefit more from smaller class size than those with average abilities. Other factors are subject matter, techniques used by teachers, and the availability of sophisticated kinds of instructional material.

What is the bottom line? the ERS survey strongly suggests that school officials should get away from rigid numerical standards and move toward more complex guidelines to establish class size. School officials, we repeat, should concern themselves more with the basic and supervening question: Which type of students might benefit the most from smaller classes?

The problem locally differs from that in other Massachusetts communities where there is declining enrollment. In many communities class size is an undisguised economic issue. Some town and school officials see declining enrollments as an opportunity to reduce the number of teachers without adversely affecting the academic program by increasing class size. But that is not precisely the way teachers and administrators see the problem.

Teachers, especially, see the whole thrust as a threat to their jobs. They argue from the contention that declining enrollments give school systems a rare opportunity to reduce class size, thereby improving the educational program.

But note carefully. Whatever economic motivations on either side color the debate, both administrators and teachers base their arguments on the rigid notion of a direct relationship between class size and scholastic achievement, even when this is a scholastic achievement, even when this is a faulty assumption.

Thus they are guilty of a costly oversimplification. As we have pointed out, small class size is desirable in the primary grades for certain subjects taught. Above the primary grades that advantage is lost, and any arguments to prove the contrary will raise the tax rate.

**The 1 out of 4 we help  
could be you.**

**United Way of Massachusetts Bay**



## Around Town Hall

### STREET LIGHT

Edmund Fortier of Evergreen Lane requested that a street light be installed at Evergreen Lane.

### CZM AID

Coastal Zone Management has once again expressed an interest in the cleaning of Straits Pond. According to CZM, the pond suffers from seasonal odors and inordinate growth of weeds and algae. They want additional water quality information for further analysis.

### ROAD CLOSED

The head engineer at the Atlantic Avenue Causeway construction site requested for public safety reasons that the road be closed. Selectmen agreed to the request. Workmen will work seven days a week to finish the seawall and there will be a detour around the construc-



tion.

### MBTA POSITION

Selectmen received a notice of a vacant position on the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Advisory Board.

### DEADLINES

—Feb. 6 is the deadline for submission of articles for the annual Town Meeting warrant.

—Town reports are due from

town offices on Jan. 19.

### PAY DISPUTE

Patrolmen Gerard Buckley and Paul Laugelle have brought their dispute for night differential compensation to the American Arbitration Association. The patrolmen feel they should receive this pay for the time they attended a police academy.

### COMMENDATION

Lester Hiltz, Director of Civil Defense, commended the firefighters of Cohasset, Hingham, Hull and Scituate for their effort in fighting the Jerusalem Road fire at the Wiseberg home.

Hiltz also expressed thanks and gratitude to the many volunteers who made their homes available to firefighters and to those who transported and dispensed coffee and refreshments to the scene.



Holiday hockey players make good use of the man-made ice on Spring Street. (Derr)

## A Thank You From Cohasset Knoll

To the Editor:

To those of you from Cohasset, Scituate, Hingham and Hull who gave of your selves and your time to the Residents of Cohasset Knoll Nursing Home, a warm thank you. The holiday season here was filled with singing, parties, presents and good cheer as a result of your efforts.

Many residents here are long time residents of this area, and it is important to them to feel that the com-

### Letters

munity still acknowledges them. By spending some time with them you did just that.

And more.

Your involvement let the residents know that you care and that they are not forgot-

ten. Your participation in Christmas at Cohasset Knoll was a beautiful present.

On behalf of the residents, I would like to wish you and your families a healthy new year. You are most welcome any time of year. Thank you again.

Jan Neri

Therapeutic Rec. Specialist

## Local \$ Sought For Harbor Dredging

Selectmen voted last week to seek an appropriation at Town Meeting to cover the town's share in completing a dredging project in Cohasset Harbor.

The Department of the Army Corps of Engineers have indicated that there are six separate areas within the harbor in six-foot anchorage that are above the project depth. Contractors would be unable to remove

these shoals with dredging equipment.

To determine if the remaining material contains ledge rock it will be necessary to obtain borings. If the suspect areas contain ledge rocks, drilling and blasting will be required, with disposal of material at Boston Harbor Lightship offshore dump site.

After a settlement of claims by the original dredging con-

tractor (Halloran Construction Co.), there remains approximately \$15,700 of unobligated contributed funds which could be applied to the removal of the remaining material.

Local cost sharing for the project amounts to 44 per cent of the cost of completion. The current estimate for completion is approximately \$130,000. Thus, the additional funds needed will be \$41,500.